



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8

1595 Wynkoop Street
DENVER, CO 80202-1129
Phone 800-227-8917
<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

MAR 26 2013

Ref: 8EPR-SR

The Honorable Jon Tester
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-2604

Dear Senator Tester:

Thank you for your letter of March 5, 2013, requesting that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) expedite a Superfund site assessment at the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company (CFAC) production facilities located in Columbia Falls, Montana. I am pleased to report that, in response to your letter, the EPA Region 8 Site Assessment Program has started the planning necessary to conduct a site assessment at the CFAC production facilities.

Our office had previously conducted a Preliminary Assessment and a Site Inspection at this facility in 1986 and 1988, respectively. The EPA and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MT DEQ) agree that site conditions have likely changed from 1988, and the appropriate next step will be for the EPA to conduct a Site Reassessment using current protocols. This work entails gathering existing information about the production facility, surrounding potentially impacted areas, and environmental data. If an actual or potential threat to human health or the environment is identified, we will collect additional environmental data to verify the presence of hazardous substances or pollutants, determine if these substances are being released to the environment, and assess if these substances have reached populations or sensitive environments. If environmental remediation is necessary, the information gathered and documented in a Site Reassessment report will inform a conversation amongst stakeholders on potential next steps. Due to the Smelter site's complexity and its location, it is difficult to predict how long our site investigation activities might take. But, it will be a priority for the EPA, and we anticipate completing our assessment within one year, depending on available resources.

Throughout the Site Reassessment process, our Superfund Program staff will coordinate with MT DEQ, and collaborate with local government elected officials and other stakeholders. We look forward to working with the community to address environmental concerns at the CFAC site and will share the investigation results with the stakeholders, as well as lead discussions on options for site cleanup and redevelopment.

Again, we appreciate your inquiry on behalf of the Columbia Falls community. If the EPA may provide anything further regarding our work at this site for you or your staff, please contact me, or your staff may wish to contact Sandy Fells, our Regional Congressional Liaison, at 303-312-6604 or fells.sandy@epa.gov.

EP05 03 04 AM
Sincerely,

James Wong
for Howard M. Cantor
Acting Regional Administrator

